

Self-Realization Fellowship "How-to-Live" Youth Program

Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) invites your child to our weeklong summer "How-to-Live" Youth Program designed to give children and teens the opportunity to more fully develop their spiritual qualities in a natural outdoor setting. The SRF ideal of balanced living, essential to happiness and success, is taught in a well-rounded schedule of meditation, practice of the SRF Energization Exercises, classes, and recreation. The program, designed for children and teens between the ages of 10 and 16, strives to create an environment that balances the spiritual activities and practices as taught by our guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, with the outdoor and recreational aspects of the camp experience.

The programs—one for boys and one for girls—will be held at beautiful Camp Arbolado. The Camp is an approximate two-hour drive northeast of Los Angeles, in the San Bernardino National Forest. The natural beauty of this forest area, with its breathtaking mountain scenery, provides an ideal setting—a living temple for experiencing God's closeness and love.

ABOUT CAMP

Accommodations

Each camper is assigned to a cabin with seven to nine others their own age and two adult group leaders. The cabins have bunk beds and electrical lighting. Restroom facilities are located in an adjacent building. Each cabin group has their classes, meals, and other activities together, giving campers the opportunity to develop friendships with those their own age. There are also many opportunities for them to meet and make friends with campers of other ages, such as movie night and the lake trip. Each child benefits from being with other spiritually inclined children while in the care of devoted and specially trained lay disciples.

Camp Elevation

Camp Arbolado is at an elevation of 6,700 feet. This means that the air is much dryer than at lower elevations. Lips chap quickly and skin can sunburn easily. As drinking a sufficient amount of water is key to preventing dehydration from dry mountain air, it is very important for each camper to drink plenty of water on the day of arrival to better adjust to the higher altitude. Applying sunscreen and lip protection on a consistent basis is also a must, so please make sure your child comes prepared.

Meditations and Spiritual Highlights

Group practice of the SRF Energization Exercises and meditation are part of the daily camp routine. Campers do the Exercises and meditate twice daily, once in the morning and once in the evening. Children meditate with others of similar age, and meditations last from 5 to 20 minutes depending on the age group. All children will be given the

opportunity to learn the SRF Hong-Sau Technique of Concentration, and those 13 and older, the SRF Aum Technique of meditation. Self-Realization Fellowship monastics provide spiritual guidance for the Program, lead meditations, hold *satsangas* (informal talks), and give individual and group counsel to campers.

A video presentation of Paramahansa Yogananda is shown during the week. At the end of the program, a special outdoor devotional ceremony with chanting is held where campers are able to offer their heartfelt prayers to God and Guru. Many campers have commented on how very meaningful and inspiring these events were for them.

Classes

Under the guidance of SRF monastics, trained lay disciples give classes on the outdoor campgrounds that focus on the spiritual teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda. Campers learn how to apply Paramahansaji's teachings in their own lives and are given the opportunity to ask the monastics questions on spiritual subjects.

Silence "God is the mirror of silence in which
all creation is reflected."
— Paramahansa Yogananda

A period of time is set aside each day for silence. During silence campers can read, reflect, do crafts, write home, relax, or participate in any quiet activity they choose. Many campers look forward to this as a very special time that provides a break from the active camp schedule.

Camp Activities

The program balances Paramahansa Yogananda's spiritual teachings with fun-filled recreational activities. There are sports, crafts, swimming, hiking, a trip to the lake where campers can go canoeing and swimming, low and high ropes, campfires under the stars, stargazing, group games, movie night, and other special events.

Meals

The camp provides three vegetarian meals per day and snacks are available. Special dietary restrictions should be discussed with the Youth Program Registrar to see if your child's needs can be accommodated. Campers take their meals together in a large dining hall and eat in silence as taught by Paramahansa Yogananda. After a full day of activity and being with friends, campers often find this quiet practice different but relaxing. There is time before and after meals for sharing with friends.

Mail

Campers are encouraged to write home at least once during their week at camp. Mail from home can be sent to Camp Arbolado at the following address:

Camp Arbolado
42500 Highway 38
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305

Calling Home

We discourage campers from calling home once they have arrived at the camp unless there are special circumstances or in case of an emergency. We have found campers are less likely to feel homesick when they absorb themselves in the program. Calling home can make them miss loved ones more. Those who are flying into Ontario can call home from the airport prior to boarding the bus to camp to let their families know they have arrived safely.

Camp Emergency Telephone Number

If for any reason you need to contact the Youth Program staff during the program, please call the camp health house at (909) 389-1126.

Homesickness

Homesickness can be natural for children who are unaccustomed to being away from home or are attending camp for the first time. Previous overnight experiences away from home may help them feel more prepared for the weeklong program. Regardless of age, it is expected that some children will experience mild to moderate degrees of homesickness. At Youth Program every effort is made to help children who experience this longing to feel comfortable in their new surroundings, get involved in camp activities, and make new friends. Please keep in mind that if you feel your son or daughter is not ready for a week away from parents, friends, and familiar surroundings, perhaps waiting another year before applying would be the best option.

TO REGISTER

Though the "How-to-Live" Youth Programs include recreational activities that are part of the camp experience, the atmosphere and emphasis are essentially spiritual. For this reason it is important that your child understand that the practices and spiritual teachings of Paramahansa Yogananda play a large part in the program. We encourage you to discuss this with your child and be sure of his or her interest in participating in the program before applying. Children applying should also familiarize themselves with this booklet. If your child is not interested in attending the Youth Program at this time, we encourage you to wait until they express an interest in the program. Please also be sure to review with your son or daughter the *Camper Agreement* at the end of the *Applicant Questionnaire*.

Please Note - All specific dates and fees are indicated on the *Registration Information sheet*.

To enroll your son or daughter, please fill out the *Application Form*, and have your child complete the *Applicant Questionnaire in its entirety*. Read this information carefully with your child, paying special attention to the "About Camp" section. Return the completed *Application*, *Parent Consent Form*, and *Registration sheet* to Self-Realization Fellowship, attention Youth Program Registrar, by the application due date. **Please note that a discount applies for early registration.**

The registration fee for each child helps to cover the cost of facilities, supplies, food, and other expenses. A Youth Program T-shirt and a group photo are included as part of the registration fee. A deposit is required to register your child which is non-refundable after a cut-off date, except in the case of a crisis or exceptional event. Scholarships are available for those who need financial assistance.

Early Registration Discount

We offer a registration discount for those who return **all of the following items** by the early registration deadline:

- 1) Completed Application and Parent Consent Form
- 2) Completed Medical Form
- 3) Immunization Records (either a photocopy or dates written on medical form)
- 4) Full payment, including transportation fees

In order for this discount to apply, there must be no signatures or information missing on the forms and the payment must be made in full, including any transportation fees, by the early registration deadline. Remember, if your child lives with both parents and both have custody, both parents' signatures are required in all places asking for permission or consent, such as the *Parent Consent form* and *Medical Form*.

To Complete Registration

The *Application, Parent Consent Form, Medical Form, Immunization Records, Transportation Form*, along with registration and transportation fees must all be received by SRF in order for your child to attend camp. Please be sure that both parents have signed the *Parent Consent* and *Release Form* and the "Permission to Provide Necessary Treatment or Emergency Care" box on the same form.

It is essential that all forms be submitted by the deadline on the *Registration Information* sheet so that we can efficiently process applications. Please complete and mail all forms to ensure they are received by this date.

If you are unable to return your child's forms by the deadline or have any questions, please contact the Youth Program Registrar immediately at (818) 549-5160.

MEDICAL FORM

The *Medical Form* is included with the *Application*. Parents must fill out the *Medical Form* with a complete health history for their son or daughter.

If more room is needed on the *Medical Form* to include all of your child's information, please attach an additional piece of paper.

For the health and well-being of your child, we recommend that children be examined each year by a licensed physician. Records of health examinations or physician's signatures are

not required on the *Medical Form*. However, up-to-date medical information must be included on the form by parents to ensure adequate care of your child at camp.

We require a copy of your child's current immunization records or the information must be written directly on the *Medical Form*. Copies of immunization records can be obtained from your child's school or your family physician. If you have chosen not to immunize your child, please note this on the *Medical Form* in the space provided and sign where indicated.

All forms submitted without required medical information, emergency contact information, or signature of the parents or guardians will be returned to you for completion. These are all needed before your child can attend Youth Program.

If you include **medical** information on the *Confidential Information* page of the *Application*, we ask that you also include the same information on the *Medical Form*. SRF will not be responsible for medical information pertinent to the proper care of your child unless it is stated on the medical form.

Parents who live in southern California often provide transportation to and from the program for their children. Children are also welcome to take a shuttle bus provided by SRF that will make several stops in the Southern California area. If your child will be riding to or from camp on this bus, please check the box indicating this on the *Application* and select the appropriate pick-up and drop-off location on the *Transportation Information Form*, which includes addresses and times for the shuttle pick-up and drop-off. The fee for this service can be found in the *Registration Information* insert.

For those families whose children will be flying to southern California to attend the program, SRF provides a charter bus traveling between the Ontario International Airport and Camp Arbolado. SRF volunteers meet and chaperone children to and from the bus and their terminal at the airport on the arrival and departure days of each program. Please see the *Flight Guidelines* information sheet, which we will send you once we confirm your child's registration, for scheduling information and guidelines. See the *Registration Information* insert for the fee associated with this service. If your child is traveling to the Youth Program by plane and will need to use this service, please check the box indicated on the *Application*. Please also fill out the *Transportation Confirmation Form* with complete flight information, including confirmation numbers and the name and address of the person meeting your child after his or her return flight home.

If your child will be flying to Youth Program, **please do not make flight arrangements** until you receive an acceptance letter from the SRF Youth Program Registrar. The *Transportation Confirmation Form* will be included with the letter.

If you have friends or relatives in the greater Los Angeles area who could drive your child to camp, you may prefer to make such arrangements rather than ride the bus. This would be very helpful to us whenever possible, as there will be many children coming from out of town who require transportation to and from the airport.

The airport service is available **only for children who are traveling by plane to Ontario Airport**. At this time we cannot provide transportation to and from other southern California airports. For this reason it is especially important, if your child will be flying, that you return all forms promptly, so that we can confirm registration and you can obtain flight arrangements as early as possible.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

As Self-Realization Fellowship shares Camp Arbolado with other groups that use this site during the summer season, we have scheduled arrival and departure times to accommodate the beginning and end of other groups' sessions. We ask that parents and campers adhere to the following hours for both boys' and girls' programs:

Arrival Day: 3 p.m. on the beginning day of each program

Day of Departure: 9:30 a.m. on the last day of each program

For parents whose children will be flying into Ontario Airport to be met by SRF volunteers, or will be riding on the temple shuttle bus to camp, please refer to the *Transportation Information* insert for schedule information.

PACKING

Please remember that we are at camp in the mountains where casual camping style clothing is appropriate. Clothes should be comfortable, durable, and appropriate for a spiritual program.

At the program campers will be spending every day in the outdoors and clothes will get very dirty. We are unable to wash clothes at camp so please pack enough for the week. Please see the *What to Bring* list to help you decide what to pack.

Please put your child's name on all clothing, personal items, sleeping bags and luggage so lost and found items can be identified and returned. Please limit luggage to two pieces in addition to a sleeping bag. Personal items should be packed in a leak-proof bag, without breakable containers.

The evenings can be very cool at Camp Arbolado so please be sure that your child has a warm jacket **and** sweater and **a warm sleeping bag**.

Please keep jewelry to a minimum. Jewelry may be easily lost and can hinder participation in some of the physical outdoor activities.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING camping knives of any kind, Walkmans, electronic games/toys, blow dryers, books or other literature. These items are not permitted at camp and can be easily lost or damaged. Additionally, your child will not need money at camp.

CRITTERS IN CAMP

Please do not bring food to camp. Snacks will be provided. **Food is not allowed in the cabins at any time.** Forest animals such as squirrels and mice can get into cabins and damage belongings to obtain food. Bears occasionally come through the camp area sniffing for food. Any candy, food or gum left over on arrival day will be collected by group leaders and stored in a safe place, then returned at the end of the program.